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Grand Strategy and the Washington High Command

In 1943 the debate within the Grand Alliance over strategy against the Axis powers entered a new stage. The midwar period (roughly to the establishment of a foothold in Normandy in the summer of 1944) was the time of increasing plenty. The power to call the tune on strategy and to choose the time and place to do battle passed to the Allies. U.S. troops and supplies flowed out in ever-increasing numbers and quantity, and the full impact of American mobilization and production was felt not only in the theaters but also in Allied councils. But the transition to the strategic initiative introduced many new and complex problems for the high command in Washington. Active and passive fronts were now established all over the world. The TORCH decision had thrown all Allied planning into a state of uncertainty. For Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall and the Army planners in the Washington command post, the basic strategic question was how to limit operations in subsidiary theaters and decisively carry the war to the Axis powers. They had to start over and seek new and firmer long-range bases upon which to plan for victory in the multifront coalition war.

Strategic Planning for Offensive Warfare: Midwar

The decision for TORCH continued to affect the great debate on European strategy between the Americans and the British that endured down to the summer of 1944. The issues that emerged were disputed in and out of the big international conferences of midwar, from Casablanca in January 1943 to Second Quebec in September 1944. In that debate Prime Minister Winston Churchill eloquently urged ever onward in the Mediterranean: Sicily, landing in Italy, Rome, the Pisa-Rimini line; then "north and northeast." President Franklin D. Roosevelt, himself fascinated by the possibilities in the Mediterranean, to a considerable extent seconded these moves, despite the reluctance of the American

chiefs. Pleading his case skillfully, the British leader stressed the need to continue the momentum, the immediate advantages, the "great prizes" to be picked up in the Mediterranean and the need to continue the softening-up process while the Allies awaited a favorable opportunity to invade the continent across the English Channel. That sizable Allied forces were present in the Mediterranean and that there was an immediate chance to weaken the enemy in that area were telling arguments.

At the same time the Americans, with General Marshall as the foremost military spokesman, gradually made progress toward limiting the Mediterranean advance, toward directing it to the west rather than to the east, toward linking it directly with a definite major cross-channel operation, and thereby winning their way back to the idea of waging a war of mass and concentration on the continent. Part of the task of military planners was to reconcile the strategic concepts of Roosevelt, Churchill, and Soviet Premier Joseph V. Stalin—a nearly impossible task. The series of decisions reached at the 1943 conferences—Casablanca in January, Washington (TRIDENT) in May, First Quebec (QUADRANT) in August, and Cairo-Tehran (SEXTANT-EUREKA) in November and December—reflect the compromises of the Americans and the British between opportunism and long-range commitments, between a war of attrition and a war of mass and concentration. They also mirrored the constant pressure of Marshall Stalin for a second front on the continent of Europe to aid him in his desperate struggle with the Nazis.

Each of these conferences marked a milestone in coalition strategy and in the maturation of American strategic planning. At Casablanca, General Marshall made a last vigorous but vain stand for a cross-channel operation in 1943. The conferees did approve the round-the-clock Combined Bomber Offensive against Germany that both the Americans and the British viewed as a prerequisite to a future cross-channel operation. The conferees' establishment of the COSSAC (Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander) to begin planning such an operation was another major accomplishment. They also assigned first priority to the U-boat war, both because of the criticality of the British food supply and the importance of control of the seas to any cross-channel operations. But no real long-range plan for the defeat of the Axis powers emerged. Casablanca merely recognized that the Anglo-Americans would retain the initiative in the Mediterranean and defined the short-range objective in terms of a prospective operation against Sicily.

THE ARMY AND THE OSS

The success of special operations early in World War II led William J. Donovan to persuade President Roosevelt to form the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Although the OSS lay outside the armed services, it came under Joint Chiefs of Staff supervision in wartime and included several military personnel. In Western Europe, the Mediterranean, China, and Southeast Asia, the OSS engaged in intelligence collection, propaganda, guerrilla warfare, sabotage, and subversion–in short, almost anything that appealed to Donovan's innovative mind. At war's end, President Harry S. Truman inactivated the OSS, but its activities later inspired the formation of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Unlike the small, disunited American delegation, the well-prepared British operated as a cohesive team and presented a united front. President Roosevelt, still attracted to the Mediterranean, had not yet made the notion of a decisive cross-channel attack his own. A striking illustration of the want of understanding between the White House and the military staffs came in connection with the unconditional-surrender formula to which Roosevelt and Churchill publicly committed themselves at Casablanca. The President had simply informed the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) of his intention to support that concept as the basic Allied aim in the war at a meeting at the White House shortly before the conference. But neither the Army nor the Joint Staff made any study of the meaning of this formula for the conduct of the war before or during the conference, nor did the President encourage his military advisers to do so.

To the American military staff it appeared at the time that the long experience of the British in international negotiations had carried the day. Keenly disappointed, Brig. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer, General Marshall's principal adviser at Casablanca, wrote: "we lost our shirts and … are now committed to a subterranean umbilicus operation in midsummer.… we came, we listened, and we were conquered." General Wedemeyer admired the way the British had presented their case:

> They swarmed down upon us like locusts with a plentiful supply of planners and various other assistants with prepared plans.… As an American I wish that we might be more glib and better organized to cope with these super negotiators. From a worm's eye viewpoint it was apparent that we were confronted by generations and generations of experience in committee work and in rationalizing points of view. They had us on the defensive practically all the time.

The members of the American military staff took the lessons of Casablanca to heart. If they did not become glibber, they at least organized themselves better. To meet the British on more equal terms, they overhauled their joint planning system and resolved to reach closer understandings with the President in advance of future meetings. As a by-product of the debate and negotiation over grand strategy in midwar, the planning techniques and methods of the Americans became more nearly like those of their British ally, even if their strategic ideas still differed. They became more skilled in the art of military diplomacy, of quid pro quo, or what might be termed the tactics of strategic planning. At the same time their strategic thinking became more sophisticated. The Casablanca Conference represented the last fling for the "either-or" school of thought in the American military staff. Henceforth, staff members began to think not in terms of this or that operation, but in terms of this *and* that—or what one planner fittingly called "permutations and combinations." The outstanding strategic questions for them were no longer to be phrased in terms of either a Mediterranean or a cross-channel operation, but in terms of defining the precise relations between them and how they related to the Combined Bomber Offensive, as well as the war against Japan.

In the debate, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff countered British demands for more emphasis upon the Mediterranean, particularly the

eastern Mediterranean, by supporting further development of Pacific offensives. Holding open the "Pacific alternative" carried with it the threat of no cross-channel operation at all. The war in the Pacific thereby offered the U.S. staff a significant lever for keeping the Mediterranean issue under control. At the same time General Marshall recognized that the Mediterranean offensive could not be stopped completely with North Africa or Sicily and that definite advantages would accrue from knocking out Italy, further opening up the Mediterranean for Allied shipping, and widening the air offensive against Germany.

Beginning with the compromise agreements at TRIDENT in the spring of 1943, the American representatives could point to definite steps toward fixing European strategy in terms of a major cross-channel undertaking for 1944. At that conference they assented to a plan for eliminating Italy from the war, which the British urged as the "great prize" after Sicily. But the forces, the Americans insisted, were to be limited as much as possible to those already in the Mediterranean. At the same time they won British agreement to the transfer of four American and three British divisions from the Mediterranean to the United Kingdom. Both sides agreed to continue the Combined Bomber Offensive from the United Kingdom in four phases to be completed by April 1944 and leading up to an invasion across the channel shortly thereafter. Most encouraging was the President's unequivocal announcement in favor of a cross-channel undertaking for the spring of 1944. The British agreed that planning should start for mounting such an operation with a target date of May 1944 on the basis of twenty-nine divisions built up in the United Kingdom (Operation ROUNDHAMMER, later called OVERLORD). The bare outlines of a new pattern of European strategy began to take shape.

That pattern took clearer shape at QUADRANT. There, the American chiefs urged a firm commitment to OVERLORD, the plan developed by a British-American planning staff in London. The British agreed but refused to give it the "overriding priority" over all operations in the Mediterranean area that the Americans desired. Plans were to proceed for eliminating Italy from the war, establishing bases as far north as Rome, seizing Sardinia and Corsica, and landing in southern France. Forces for these operations would be limited to those allotted at TRIDENT. With a definite limitation on the Mediterranean offensive and authorization for a definite allocation of forces for the approved cross-channel operation and for an extended Combined Bomber Offensive in support of it, the strategic pattern against Germany was taking on more final form.

After QUADRANT came new danger signals for the Washington high command. The British were making overtures for active operations in the Aegean, which the Americans interpreted, wrongly or rightly, as a prelude to a move on the Balkans (Churchill's "soft-underbelly" of Europe fixation) and a consequent threat to the cross-channel strategy. At the Moscow Conference in October 1943 came other warning signs from another and more unexpected source. At that meeting of the foreign ministers, a prelude to the full-dress conference at Tehran to follow, the representatives of the Anglo-American staffs met for the first time with the Russian staff. In a surprise maneuver, the Russians, who from the beginning had been pleading for the second front in Europe, intimated that they might be willing to accept an active campaign in Italy

as the second front. The Russian delegation would never have generated such an idea without the personal approval of Stalin.

With these portents in mind, the uneasy American Joint Chiefs of Staff accompanied President Roosevelt on board the USS *Iowa* en route to the Cairo Conference in November 1943. During the rehearsals on that voyage for the meetings ahead, the President afforded his military advisers a rare glimpse into his reflections on the political problems that were bound up with the war and its outcome. His concern lest the United States be drawn into a permanent or lengthy occupation of Europe came out sharply in the discussion with the JCS on the zones of occupation in postwar Germany. He told the JCS, "We should not get roped into accepting any European sphere of influence." Nor did he wish the United States to become involved in a prolonged task of reconstituting France, Italy, and the Balkans. "France," he declared, "is a British baby." Significantly, the President added: "There would definitely be a race for Berlin. We may have to put the United States Divisions into Berlin as soon as possible." With a pencil he quickly sketched on a simple map of Europe the zonal boundaries he envisaged, putting Berlin and Leipzig in a big American zone in northern Germany—one of the most unusual records of the entire war and later brought back to Washington by Army officers in the American delegation.

Tehran proved to be the decisive conference in determining the strategy for the war in Europe. There, for the first time in the war, President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and their staffs met with Marshal Stalin, the Soviet dictator, and his staff. Churchill made eloquent appeals for operations in Italy, the Aegean, and the east Mediterranean, even at the expense of a delay in OVERLORD. For reasons of its own, the USSR put its weight behind the American concept of strategy. Confident of its capabilities, demonstrated in its great comeback since the critical days of Stalingrad, the Soviet Union asserted its full power as an equal member of the Allied coalition. Stalin came out vigorously in favor of OVERLORD and limiting further operations in the Mediterranean to one operation directly assisting OVERLORD, an invasion of southern France. In turn, the Russians promised to launch an all-out offensive on their front to accompany the Allied moves and to enter the war against Japan as soon as Germany was defeated. Stalin's strong stand put the capstone on the Western strategy against Germany. The Anglo-American chiefs agreed to launch OVERLORD during May 1944 in conjunction with a southern France operation and to consider these the supreme operations for that year.

Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill at the Tehran Conference

The final blueprint for Allied victory in Europe had taken shape. Germany was to be crushed between the jaws of a gigantic vise applied from the

west and the east. How much reliance President Roosevelt had come to place in General Marshall was reflected in his decision not to release Marshall for the command of the cross-channel attack. He told General Marshall, "I … could not sleep at night with you out of the country." While it must have been a major disappointment to Marshall, he put the long-hoped-for command behind him and focused on the job at hand. President Roosevelt gave the nod to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had built a solid reputation as the successful leader of coalition forces in the Mediterranean. Preparations for the big cross-channel attack began in earnest.

The last lingering issue in the long-drawn-out debate was not settled until the summer of 1944. In the months following the Tehran Conference, the southern France operation came perilously close to being abandoned in favor of the British desire for further exploitation in Italy and possibly even across the Julian Alps into the Hungarian plain. Complicating the picture was a shortage of landing craft to carry off both OVERLORD and the southern France attack simultaneously. But General Marshall and the Washington military authorities, backed by President Roosevelt, remained adamant on the southern attack. The British and the Americans did not reach final agreement on a southern France operation until August—two months after the OVERLORD landings—just a few days before the operation was actually launched, when Churchill reluctantly yielded. This concluding phase of the debate represented the last gasp of the peripheral strategy with a new and sharper political twist. Churchill was now warily watching the changing European scene with one eye on the retreating Germans and the other on the advancing Russians.

A number of misconceptions would arise during the postwar period about this Anglo-American debate over strategy. What was at stake in the midwar debate was not whether to launch a cross-channel operation. Rather, the question was: Should that operation be the full-bodied drive with a definite target date that the Americans desired or the final blow to an enemy critically weakened in a war of opportunity that the British desired? It is a mistake to assume that the British did not from the first want a cross-channel operation. The difference lay essentially in the precise timing of that attack and in the extent and direction of preparatory operations. Once agreed on the major blow, the British stoutly held out for a strong initial assault that would ensure success in the operation. It is also a mistake to assume that the Americans remained opposed to all Mediterranean operations. Indeed, much of their effort in 1943–1944 was spent in reconciling those operations with a prospective cross-channel operation.

What about the question of a Balkan alternative that has aroused so much controversy? Would it not have been wiser to have invaded the continent through the Balkans, thereby forestalling Soviet domination? We must emphasize the fact that this is a postwar debate. The Balkan invasion was never proposed by any responsible leader in Allied strategy councils as an alternative to OVERLORD, nor did any Allied debate or combined planning take place in those terms. After the war Churchill steadfastly denied that he wanted a Balkan invasion. The British contended that the Americans had been frightened by the specter rather than by the substance of the British proposals. Indeed, the American

staff had been frightened by the implications of Churchillian proposals for raids, assistance to native populations, throwing in a few armored divisions, and the like—for the eastern Mediterranean and Balkan regions. For the American staff, Mediterranean operations had offered a striking demonstration of how great the costs of a war of attrition could be. The so-called soft underbelly of Italy, to which the Prime Minister had glowingly referred, turned out to be a hard-shelled back demanding more and more increments of American and Allied men and means. The mere thought of being sucked step by step, by design or by circumstance, into a similar undertaking in the Balkans, an area of poor terrain and communications—even if it were an unrealistic fear on the part of the American staff—was enough to send shivers up the spines of American planners. Certainly, neither the President nor the American staff wanted to get involved in the thorny politics of the Balkan area, and both were determined to stay out. The Allies never argued out the Balkan question in frank military or political terms during World War II.

Frustrated by the loss of what he regarded as glittering opportunities in the Mediterranean, Churchill struck out after the war at the American wartime "logical, large-scale mass-production thinking." But Gordon Harrison, the author of *Cross-Channel Attack*, argued: "To accuse Americans of mass-production thinking is only to accuse them of having a mass-production economy and of recognizing the military advantage of such an economy. The Americans were power-minded." From the beginning they thought in terms of taking on the main German armies and beating them. Behind the Americans' fear of a policy of attritional and peripheral warfare against Germany in midwar lay a continued anxiety over its ultimate costs in men, resources, and time. This anxiety was increased by their concern with getting on with the war against Japan. Basic in their thinking was a growing realization of the ultimate limits of American manpower and a growing anxiety about the effects of a long, continuous period of maximum mobilization on the home front. All these factors combined to confirm their faith in the doctrine of military concentration. It was an exercise in the principle of mass on a large scale.

As it turned out, the final strategy against Germany was a compromise of American and British views—of British peripheral strategy and the American principle of concentration. To the extent that the cross-channel operation was delayed a year later than the Americans wished in order to take advantage of Mediterranean opportunities and to continue the softening-up process, the British prevailed. Perhaps still haunted by the ghosts of Passchendaele and Dunkerque, the British were particularly sensitive to the requisite conditions for OVERLORD, for example, how many enemy troops could be expected to oppose it. But, as the Americans had hoped from the beginning, the cross-channel attack turned out to be a conclusive operation with a fixed target date; it was given the highest priority and the maximum force to drive directly at the heart of German power.

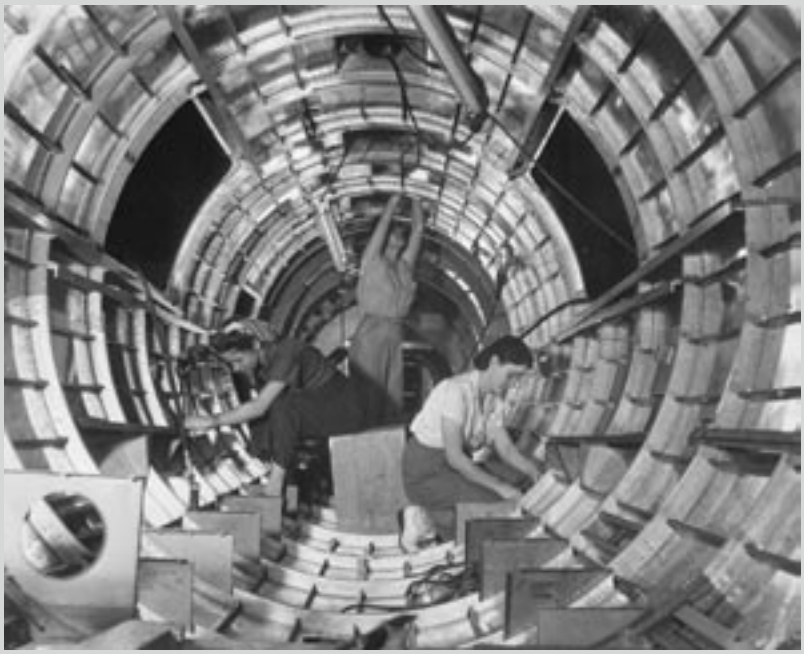
Thus, by the summer of 1944 the final blueprinting of the Allied strategy for defeating Germany was complete. Despite the compromises with opportunism, American staff notions of fighting a concentrated, decisive war had been clearly written into the final pattern. Those no-

tions had been reinforced by the addition, from Casablanca onward, of the unconditional-surrender aim. The peripheral trend had been brought under control, and General Marshall had managed to conserve American military power for the big cross-channel blow. The Americans had learned to deal with the British on more equal terms. The military chiefs had drawn closer to the President, and the U.S. side was able to present a united front vis-à-vis the British.

During the midwar Anglo-American debate, significant changes had taken place in the alignment of power within the Grand Alliance. These shifts had implications as important for war strategy as for future relations among the wartime partners. By the close of 1943 the mighty American industrial and military machine was in high gear. The growing flow of American military strength and supplies to the European Theater assured the acceptance of the American strategic concept. The Soviet Union, steadily gathering strength and confidence in 1943, made its weight felt at a critical point in the strategic debate. Britain had virtually completed its mobilization by the end of 1943, and stresses and strains had begun to appear in its economy. Relative to the Soviet Union and the United States, Britain was becoming weaker. In midwar the Americans drew up with and threatened to pass the British in deployed strength in the European Theater. Within the coalition, Britain's

Industrial Mobilization

The reverse of Axis fortunes in World War II roughly coincided with the entry of the "arsenal of democracy" into the conflict. In 1944 the United States produced more than 40 percent of global munitions output and greatly exceeded the combined output of either all the Axis or all the Allied countries.



Left: *Women workers install fixtures and assemblies to a tail fuselage section of a B–17 bomber.* Above: *Production Aids for the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation.*

military power and notions of fighting the war were being overtaken. Tehran, which fixed the final European strategy, marked a subtle but important change in the foundations of the Alliance. For the strategists of the Pentagon and of the Kremlin the doctrine of concentration had provided a common bond.

Completing the Strategic Patterns

From the standpoint of the Washington high command, the main story of military strategy in World War II, except for the important and still unanswered question of how to defeat Japan, came to an end in the summer of 1944. The last stage, culminating in the surrender of Germany and of Japan, was the period of the payoff, of the unfolding of strategy in the field. In this final phase, the problems of winning the war began to run up against the problems of winning the peace.

Once the Allied forces became firmly lodged on the European continent and took up the pursuit of the German forces, the war became for General Marshall and his staff essentially a matter of tactics and logistics with the Supreme Allied Commander, General Eisenhower, assuming the responsibility for making decisions as military circumstances in the field dictated. But to Churchill, disturbed by the swift Soviet advance into Poland and the Balkans, the war seemed more than ever a contest for great political stakes. In the last year of the European conflict, therefore, the two approaches often became a question of military tactics versus political considerations.

By the summer of 1944 the shape of things to come was already apparent. Once on the continent, General Eisenhower was given more and more responsibility for political decisions or fell heir to them by default. Lacking political guidance from Washington, the commander in the field made decisions on the basis of military considerations. He fell back on the U.S. staff notions of defeating the enemy and ending the war quickly and decisively with the fewest casualties. This trend became even more marked in 1945 in the commander's decision to stop at the Elbe and not to attempt to take Berlin or Prague ahead of the Russians.

As usual, General Marshall and the U.S. staff backed the decisions of the commander in the field. Typical of Marshall's approach were two statements he made in April 1945: one in response to a British proposal to capture Berlin, the other concerning the liberation of Prague. With reference to Berlin, Marshall joined with his colleagues in the JCS in emphasizing to the British Chiefs of Staff "that the destruction of the German armed forces is more important than any political or psychological advantages which might be derived from possible capture of the German capital ahead of the Russians.… Only Eisenhower is in a position to make a decision concerning his battle and the best way to exploit successes to the full." With respect to Prague, Marshall wrote to Eisenhower, "Personally and aside from all logistic, tactical or strategic implications, I would be loath to hazard American lives for purely political purposes."

Such views of the Army Chief of Staff took on added significance, for during Roosevelt's final and his successor's early days in office the burden of dealing with important issues fell heavily on the senior mili-

tary advisers in the Washington high command. Marshall's stand on these issues was entirely consistent with earlier Army strategic planning. Whatever the ultimate political outcome, from the standpoint of a decisive military conclusion of the war against Germany it made little difference whether the forces of the United States or those of the Soviet Union took Berlin and Prague. At the same time, in purely military dealings with the Russians in the closing months of the European conflict, and as Soviet and American troops drew closer, the American staff began to stiffen its stand and a firmer note crept into its negotiations for coordination of Allied efforts. Early in 1945 Marshall advised Eisenhower to forget diplomatic niceties in dealing with the Russians and urged him to adopt a direct approach "in simple Main Street Abilene style."

Churchill's inability to reverse the course of the last year of the war underscored the changed relationships between U.S. and British national military weight and the shifting bases of the Grand Alliance. With British manpower already mobilized to the hilt, after the middle of 1944 British production became increasingly unbalanced; the British fought the remainder of the war with a contracting economy. The Americans did not hit the peak of their military manpower mobilization until May 1945—the month Germany surrendered. Reaching their war production peak at the end of 1943, they were able to sustain it at high levels to the end of the war. The greater capacity of the American economy and population to support a sustained, large-scale Allied offensive effort showed up clearly in the last year of the European war. Once entrenched on the continent, American divisions began to outnumber the British more and more. Through the huge stockpiles of American materiel already built up and through control of the growing U.S. military manpower on the continent, General Eisenhower ensured the primacy of U.S. staff thinking on how to win the war. Whatever his political predilections, Churchill had to yield. As the war against Germany lengthened beyond the hoped-for end in 1944, British influence in high Allied councils went into further decline. The last year of the war saw the United States and the Soviet Union emerging as the two strongest military powers in Europe, the one as intent on leaving Europe soon as the other was on pushing its strategic frontiers westward. On the Western side, the struggle was to be concluded the way the American military chiefs had wished to wage it from the beginning—as a conventional war of concentration.

The greater capacity of the American economy and population to support a sustained, large-scale Allied offensive effort showed up clearly in the last year of the European war.

Meanwhile, as the war with Germany was drawing to a close, the strategy for defeating Japan had gradually been taking shape. Despite the Germany-first principle, the so-called secondary war simply would not stand still. From the beginning, in the defensive as well as in the offensive stage, the Pacific exerted a strong pull on American forces and resources. Though final plans had to await the defeat of Germany, American public opinion would not tolerate a strictly defensive, limited war against Japan in the meantime. The pace of advance in the Pacific became so fast that it almost caught up with the European conflict. In the Pacific, as in the Mediterranean, American strategists learned that forces in being had a way of creating their own strategy.

While the European war strategy was fashioned on the international level, the war against Japan from the beginning was almost exclu-

sively an American affair, its strategy essentially an interservice concern. The American plans and decisions in the Pacific war were presented to the international conferences, where they usually received Allied approval with little debate. Disputes and arguments were on the service level for the most part, with General Marshall and Admiral Ernest J. King (Chief of Naval Operations) working out compromises between themselves. In the process General Marshall often acted as mediator between the Navy and General Douglas MacArthur, the Commander of the Southwest Pacific Area.

The traditional naval concern with the Pacific and the necessarily heavy reliance in the theater upon shipping, especially assault shipping, put the main burden of developing offensive strategy upon the Navy. But Navy plans for a central Pacific offensive had to be reconciled with General MacArthur's concept of approaching Japan via the New Guinea–Philippines axis. Thus a twofold approach, "a one-two punch," replaced the original single-axis strategy. This double-axis advance produced a strategy of opportunity similar to what the British had urged for the war in Europe and took the Allies to the threshold of Japan by the time the European war ended. Long debated was the critical question of whether Japan could be defeated by bombardment and blockade alone or if an invasion would be necessary. In Washington, during the late spring of 1945, the Army's argument that plans and preparations should be made for an invasion was accepted as the safe course to follow.

The rapid pace of the Pacific advance outran the American plans for the China-Burma-India Theater, and that theater declined in strategic importance in the war against Japan. Disillusioned by Chinas' inability to play an active role in the final defeat of Japan, American military leaders sought to substitute the USSR. To save American lives in a Pacific OVERLORD, those leaders in general became eager to have the USSR enter the war against Japan and pin down Japanese forces on the Asiatic mainland. Before final plans for a Pacific OVERLORD could be put into effect, however, the Japanese surrendered. The dramatic dropping of atomic bombs on August 6 and 9 on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, respectively, came as a complete surprise to the American public and to the Army strategic planners, with the exception of a handful of top officers in the Washington command post who were in on the secret. In a sense the supersession of strategic plans by a revolutionary development of weapons was a fitting climax to a war that had throughout shown a strong tendency to go its own way.

The last year of the war witnessed, along with the finishing touches on grand strategy, the changeover from the predominantly military to the politico-military phase. As victory loomed, stresses and strains within the coalition became more apparent. With the Second Quebec Conference in September 1944, agreement among the Allies on military plans and war strategy became less urgent than the need to arrive at acceptable politico-military terms on which the winning powers could continue to collaborate. That need became even more marked at Yalta in February 1945 and at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945. To handle these new challenges after building up a staff mechanism geared to the predominantly military business of fighting a global and coalition war necessitated considerable adjustment of Army staff processes and

planning. In midwar, Army planning had been geared to achieve the decisive blow on the continent that had been a cardinal element in the planners' strategic faith. Scarcely were the Western Allies ensconced on the continent, however, when the challenges of victory and peace were upon the Army planners. They entered the last year of the war with the coalition disintegrating, the President failing in health, and a well-organized politico-military machine lacking. Besides the frictions generating on the foreign fronts, the Army still had to cope with the immense problem of what to do with the beaten foe—with terms of surrender, occupation, and postwar bases. The military inherited by default problems no longer easily divided into military and political.

Expansion and Distribution of the Wartime Army

To the Washington high command, strategic plans were one vital ingredient in the formula for victory. Manpower was another. Indeed, at stake in the midwar debate was the fresh and flexible military power of the United States. That power was also General Marshall's trump card in negotiations with the coalition partners. To put a brake on diversionary deployments to secondary theaters and ventures and to conserve American military manpower for the big cross-channel blow became the major preoccupation of the Chief of Staff and his advisers in midwar. Behind their concern for effective presentation of the American strategic case at the midwar international conferences lay the growing uneasiness of General Marshall and his staff over the American manpower problem. To continue what appeared to them to be essentially a

Homeland Security during World War II

Prior to World War II, U.S. national strategy had centered on defending the United States and its possessions against invasion and other foreign military threats. With the outbreak of war in Europe, U.S. strategic planning shifted to embrace participation in a coalition war against Germany, Italy, and Japan. Despite prosecuting a global war, however, the Army retained significant responsibilities for homeland security. That mission entailed theater air defense, maintaining coastal fortifications near major harbors, guarding major defense plants and railroads, and supporting the Office of Civilian Defense that coordinated the efforts of some 5 million volunteers nationwide. The War Department feared with good reason that the last two functions could impair the Army's meeting its strategic commitments overseas. The lack of any realized threat to the United States allowed the Army to gradually deemphasize its homeland security mission and reduce troops assigned to this mission to fewer than 65,000 in mid-1944, with troops being replaced by auxiliary military police and state guard forces.

Homefront Fires Are Enemy Victories, *Jes W. Schlaikjer, 1944*

policy of drift in Allied strategy raised grave issues about mobilizing and deploying U.S. forces. To support a war of attrition and peripheral action, in place of concentrated effort, raised serious problems about the size and kind of Army the United States should and could maintain.

To establish a proper manpower balance for the United States in wartime was as difficult as it was important. In light of the estimated 15–16 million men physically fit for active military service, on the surface it seemed hard to understand why there should be any U.S. manpower problem at all. The problem as well as the answer stemmed basically from the fact that the Allies had from the beginning accepted the proposition that the single greatest tangible asset the United States brought to the coalition in World War II was the productive capacity of its industry. From the very beginning, U.S. manpower calculations had to be closely correlated with the needs of war industry.

The Army therefore had to compete for manpower not only with the needs of the other services but also with the claims of its own industry. By 1943 the arsenal of democracy was just beginning to hit its full productive stride. To cut too deeply into the industrial manpower of the country in order to furnish men for the Army and Navy might interfere seriously with arming U.S. and Allied troops. Furthermore, the United States was fighting a global conflict. To service its lines of communications extending around the world required large numbers of men, and great numbers of troops were constantly in transit to and from the theaters. To carry the fight across the oceans demanded a powerful Navy and a large merchant fleet that also had to be given a high priority for manpower. Each industry as well as each theater commander was continually calling for more men. The problem for the Army was not only how much it should receive for its share of the manpower pool but also how it should divide that share most effectively to meet the diverse demands made upon it.

By 1943 the Army Staff increasingly realized that the U.S. manpower barrel did have a bottom. Even before the end of 1942 the bottom was becoming visible. Also evident was the fact that, while the United States would remain the major arsenal of democracy, it could no longer be regarded as a limitless source of munitions. The pool of unemployed that had cushioned the shock of mobilization for three years had been almost drained. Industrial expansion had slowed; labor had become tight in many areas; and in November 1942 the President had placed a ceiling of 8.2 million officers and men upon the Army's expansion during 1943, intimating at the same time that this limit would probably hold for the duration of the war. General Marshall and his colleagues in the JCS were still determined that the United States make a major contribution in fighting forces to the defeat of the Axis powers. But postponement of the invasion of northwestern Europe, together with the indicated limitations on American manpower and resources, made it necessary to reconsider the nature of that contribution. To match strategy, manpower, and production for the offensive phase of the war became a basic task of the Washington high command during the remainder of the war.

Supply programs for 1943 reflected prospective changes in the American role in the war. Cuts fell most heavily on the ground munitions program, which was reduced by more than one-fifth, and on

Americans Will Always Fight for Liberty, *Bernard Perlin, 1943*

Lend-Lease to nations other than the Soviet Union. Some reductions were also made in naval ship construction, but the program for building escort vessels was left intact and the merchant shipbuilding program was actually enlarged. The emphasis was on producing first all the tools needed to defeat the U-boats and secure the sea lanes for the deployment of American forces overseas and at the same time to ensure that ample shipping would be available for this purpose. Soviet armies had to be assured a continuous flow of munitions to stave off the Germans. Meanwhile, airpower—heavy bombers to batter the German homeland, carrier-borne aircraft to restore mobility and striking power to the forces in the Pacific—had to be built up and brought to bear as rapidly as possible, while the slower mobilization and deployment of ground forces was under way. The ground army, finally, had to be shaped to operate, at least during the coming year and a half, in relatively small packages at the end of long lines of communications in a great variety of terrain. Its units had to be compact, versatile, and easily transportable, but also mobile and able to hit hard. Every ton of shipping, as Lt. Gen. Lesley J. McNair, head of the Army Ground Forces, declared, had to deliver the maximum of fighting power.

The changing requirements and circumstances of coalition warfare in the offensive phase greatly affected plans and programs for expanding the U.S. Army—in total growth and internal distribution of strength as well as in overseas deployment. Manpower squeezes, together with strategic, logistical, and operational considerations, helped to change the shape as well as the size of the Army. By the end of 1942 the U.S. Army had grown to a strength of 5.4 million officers and men. Although this was still well under the ceiling of 8.2 million the President set in November, the mobilization of ground combat elements was already nearing completion. Seventy-three divisions were then in being, and no more than 100 were expected to be activated. In June 1943 the goal was reduced to ninety divisions, with an overall strength ceiling of 7.7 million men—far under the heavily mechanized force of 215 divisions that the framers of the Victory Program in 1941 had considered none too large to take on the German Army. Actually, the U.S. Army in 1945 reached a peak strength of 8.3 million and eighty-nine divisions. The last division was activated in August 1943.

The strength of ground combat units in the Army increased hardly at all after 1942, even though sixteen divisions and some 350 separate artillery and engineer battalions were added after that date. These additional units had to be formed by means of redistribution and economies within existing personnel allotments in the same categories. Since the Army as a whole increased by almost 3 million men after 1942, its ground combat elements, even including replacements, declined from over half the Army's total strength at the beginning of 1942 to about a third in the spring of 1945. It was no mean achievement to maintain

the Army's combat units at full strength during the heavy fighting of 1944 and 1945. Neither the Germans nor the Japanese were able to do as much.

Mindful of the untrained divisions sent overseas in World War I, General Marshall from the first set as his goal thorough and realistic training of large units in the United States culminating in large-scale maneuvers by corps and armies. Since all divisions had been activated by August 1943 and the mass deployment of the Army overseas did not begin until late in that year, most divisions were thoroughly trained. The major threat to an orderly training program came in 1944, when many trained divisions had to be skeletonized to meet the demand for trained replacements. Equipment shortages were a serious obstacle to effective training in early 1943, as in 1942, as was the shortage of trained commissioned and noncommissioned officers to provide cadres.

In 1943 the Army's ground combat forces continued to undergo the drastic reorganization and streamlining begun in 1942. Changes in the types of units required reduced the planned number of armored divisions from twenty to sixteen, eliminated all motorized divisions, and cut back tank-destroyer and antiaircraft units. The armored corps disappeared. Armored and infantry divisions were reduced in personnel and equipment. Tanks taken from armored divisions were organized into separate tank battalions, to be attached to divisions as needed; motor transport was pooled under corps or army headquarters for greater flexibility.

The division remained the basic fighting team of arms and services combined in proportions designed for continuous offensive action under normal battle conditions. It retained a triangular organization. The infantry division contained 3 regiments and included, besides 4 artillery battalions (3 armed with 105-mm. howitzers, 1 with 155-mm. howitzers), a reconnaissance troop (scout cars and light tanks), and engineer, ordnance, signal, quartermaster, medical, and military police units. Each regiment could readily be teamed with an artillery battalion. Reinforced with other elements of the division or with elements assigned by corps or army headquarters, it formed the regimental combat team. The total strength of the infantry division was reduced from its prewar strength of 15,245 to 14,253.

The armored division as organized in 1942 had consisted of 2 tank regiments and 1 armored infantry regiment plus 3 battalions of armored artillery and an armored reconnaissance battalion. This arrangement was calculated to produce 2 combat commands with varying proportions of tanks and infantry in division reserve. The armored division also included supporting elements corresponding to those in the infantry divisions but motorized to increase mobility. In the armored division as reorganized in 1943, battalions replaced regiments. The new model contained 3 medium tank battalions, 3 armored infantry battalions, and 3 armored artillery battalions. These, with supporting elements, could be combined readily into 3 combat commands (A, B, and Reserve). The total strength of the armored division was reduced from 14,620 to 10,937. Two armored divisions remained "heavy" divisions, with the old organization, until the end of the war.

The only other special type of division of real importance retained in 1943 was the airborne division. Including parachute and glider-borne regiments, it was designed as a miniature infantry division, with

lighter, more easily transportable artillery and the minimum of vehicles and service elements needed to keep it fighting after an airdrop until it could be reinforced. Its strength was only 8,500 until early 1945, when it was raised to 12,979. By the beginning of 1945 other experimental and special-type divisions (mountain, motorized, light, jungle, and cavalry) had either disappeared or largely lost their special characteristics.

Underlying all this change were the basic aims of making ground forces mobile, flexible, and easily transportable by increasing the proportion of standardized and interchangeable units in less rigid tactical combinations. Nor did this streamlining involve any sacrifice of effective power. Army leaders were convinced, and experience on the whole proved, that these units could not only move faster and farther, but they could also strike even harder than the units they replaced.

Premobilization planning had contemplated that African Americans would be included in the ranks of a wartime Army proportionately to their number in the whole population and proportionately also in each of the arms and services. The Army achieved neither goal; but the number of African-American troops reached a peak strength of over 700,000, and more than 500,000 of them served overseas. Contemporary attitudes and practices in American society kept African Americans in segregated units throughout the war. Most African-American soldiers overseas were in supply and construction units. In truck units such as the famous Red Ball Express in Northern France in 1944, African-American manpower proved a critical asset in winning the supply battle so crucial to victory at the front. Many others who served in the two African-American combat divisions (the 92d and 93d Infantry Divisions), in separate combat support battalions, and in a fighter group directly engaged the enemy on the ground and in the air.

In 1944 the manpower shortage became nationwide. The Army, under the double pressures of accelerated deployment schedules and heavy demands for infantry replacements for battle casualties in the two-front full-scale war, was driven to stringent measures. The Army Specialized Training Program, which had absorbed 150,000 soldiers in college study, was dissolved; the aviation cadet training program was drastically curtailed. To release soldiers for battle, the Army drew heavily on limited-service personnel and women for noncombat duties. The induction of female volunteers had begun in mid-1942; and in the following year, for the first time in the Army's history, women had been given a full legal military status in the Women's Army Corps (WAC). Growing in strength, the WAC reached a peak of 100,000 by the spring of 1945.

As the Army moved overseas, many posts were consolidated or closed, releasing large numbers of overhead personnel. Overstrength tactical units were reduced in size and the excess manpower transferred to other units or the individual replacement pool. Coast artillery units were converted to heavy artillery, hundreds of antiaircraft units were dissolved, and nondivisional infantry regiments became a source of infantry replacements. To meet the threat of the German counteroffensive in the Ardennes in December 1944, the handful of divisions remaining in the United States, most of them earmarked for the Pacific, were rushed to Europe; the United States was left without a strategic reserve.

In May 1945 the overall ground army numbered 68 infantry, 16 armored, and 5 airborne divisions.

The extent to which the Army depended on its air arm to confer striking power and mobility is suggested by the enormous growth of the Army Air Forces (AAF): from about 400,000 men at the beginning of 1942 to a peak of over 2.4 million early in 1944. At the end of the war in Europe, it had 243 organized groups in being and a numerical strength of 2.3 million men. More than 1.5 million of the worldwide AAF strength in March 1945 consisted of service troops, troops in training, and overhead.

After 1942 the growth of the ground army also occurred for the most part in services and administrative elements. By March 1945 these comprised 2.1 million (not counting hospital patients and casuals en route) of the ground army's 5.9 million personnel. This growth reflected both the global character of the war, with its long lines of communications, and the immense numbers of noncombatant specialists needed to operate and service the equipment of a modern mechanized army. They were also a manifestation of the American people's insistence on providing the American citizen-soldier with something like his accustomed standard of living. Less tangible and more difficult to control was the demand for large administrative and coordinating staffs, which was self-generating since administrators themselves had to be administered and coordinators coordinated. One of the most conspicuous phenomena of global war was the big headquarters. In the European Theater in 1944, overhead personnel, largely in higher headquarters, numbered some 114,000 men. On the eve of V-E Day, with overseas deployment for the two-front war complete, almost 1.3 million of the 2.8 million men who remained in the United States were in War Department, Army Ground Forces, Army Service Forces, and Army Air Forces overhead agencies to operate the Zone of the Interior establishment.

The assignment to the Army of various administrative tasks swelled the demand for noncombatant personnel. One such task was the administration of military Lend-Lease. Another was the development of the atomic bomb, the super-secret, $2 billion Manhattan Project assigned to the Corps of Engineers. Two of the Army's overseas commands (the China-Burma-India Theater and the Persian Gulf Command) had missions largely logistical in character. From the first the Pacific theaters generated the heaviest demands for service troops to build, operate, and service the manifold facilities a modern army needed in regions where these had been virtually nonexistent. To a lesser degree these needs were also present in the Mediterranean, and operations against the Germans everywhere involved the task of repairing the ruin the enemy had wrought. Big construction projects like the Alcan Highway (from western Canada to Alaska) and the Ledo Road in Burma added to the burden. To carry out the Army's vast procurement program (to compute requirements, negotiate contracts, and expedite production) called for a multitude of highly trained administrators, mostly civilian businessmen whom the Army put into uniform.

Thus, for every three fighting men in the ground army there were two technicians or administrators somewhere behind, engaged in functions other than killing the enemy. Behind the fighting front stretched the pipeline filled with what General McNair once called "the invisible

horde of people going here and there but seemingly never arriving." In March 1945 casuals en route or in process of assignment numbered 300,000. Far more numerous were the replacements, who at this time totaled 800,000 in the ground army; AAF replacements numbered 300,000. The Army had made almost no provision for replacements in the early plans for creating units. The necessity of providing spaces for them as well as for larger numbers of service and AAF troops in the Army's total allotment of manpower went far to account for the difference between the 215 divisions in the original Victory Program and the 89 actually organized.

Replacements kept the effective strength of the Army from declining. The number of soldiers in hospitals in World War II seldom fell below 200,000 and at the beginning of 1945 reached a peak of almost 500,000. Throughout the war the Army suffered a total of 936,000 battle casualties, including 235,000 dead; to the latter must be added 83,400 nonbattle deaths. The Army's dead represented about 3 percent of the 10.4 million men who served in its ranks during World War II.

Despite the acknowledged primacy of the European war, only gradually did the flow of American troops overseas take the direction the Army planners desired. Not until OVERLORD was given top priority at the Tehran Conference at the end of 1943 could the two-front war finally begin to assume the focus and flow into the channels the War Department had planned for in the early stages of the coalition war. During 1943 the Army sent overseas close to 1.5 million men, including 13 divisions. Over two-thirds of these totals, including more than 1 million troops and 9 divisions, were deployed against Germany. In these terms the balance was finally being redressed in favor of the war against Germany. The cumulative totals at the end of 1943 showed 1.4 million men, including 17 divisions, deployed against Germany, as opposed to 913,000 troops, including 13 divisions, lined up against Japan—a sharp contrast to the picture at the end of 1942, when in manpower and number of divisions the war against Japan had maintained an edge over the war in Europe.

On the other hand, the failure of the Allies to agree on a specific plan for the cross-channel attack until Tehran permitted deployment in the war against Japan to develop at a much quicker pace than the planners had expected. It was not until October 1943 that the divisions in Europe exceeded those in the Pacific. And when the efforts of the Navy and Marine Corps, especially in the Pacific, are added to Army deployment overseas, a different picture emerges. Actually, after two years of war, the balance of U.S. forces—and resources—between the European and Japanese arenas was fairly even. Indeed, of the total of 3.7 million men (Army, Navy, and Marines) overseas during 1943, slightly more than half were arrayed against Japan. By the close of that year Army planners fully comprehended the growing costs of fighting a multifront war on an opportunistic basis and the difficulty of keeping a secondary war secondary in the absence of a firm long-range plan for the primary war.

By the end of the midwar period, in September 1944, General Marshall and his staff could survey the state of Army deployment with considerable satisfaction. Channeling U.S. military power to the United Kingdom for a concentrated attack against Germany had been a

long struggle. More divisions were sent overseas in the first nine months of 1944, with the bulk of them going to the European Theater, than had been shipped overseas during the previous two years. To support OVERLORD and its follow-up operations, the Army funneled forces into the European Theater and later into continental Europe in ever-increasing numbers during the first three quarters of 1944. Slightly over 2 million men, including 34 divisions and 103 air groups, were in the European Theater at the end of September 1944—over 45 percent of the total number of troops overseas in all theaters. By then, the overall breakdown of Army troops overseas gave the war against Germany a 2:1 advantage over the Japanese conflict, and this was matched by the Army divisional distribution. Forty divisions were located in Europe and the Mediterranean, with 4 more en route, compared with 21 in the Pacific. In the air, the preponderance lay even more heavily in favor of Europe. With the bulk of the Army's combat strength overseas deployed against the Third Reich and with most of the divisions still in the United States slated to go to the European Theater, General Marshall and his planners could consider their original concept well on the way to accomplishment. Though there were still over 3.5 million men left in the continental United States at the end of September, there were only 24 combat divisions remaining. The Army planners had hoped to maintain some of the divisions as a strategic reserve to cope with emergencies.

When the crisis caused by the Ardennes breakthrough of December 1944 denuded the United States of all the remaining divisions, the possibility of having raised too few divisions caused War Department leaders from Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson on down some anxious moments. Fortunately, this was the last unpleasant surprise; another such crisis would have found the divisional cupboard bare. Indeed, the decision for ninety divisions—the Army's "cutting edge"—was one of the greatest gambles the Washington high command took during World War II.

Thus, in the long run, Marshall and his staff were not only able to reverse the trend toward the Pacific that had lasted well into 1943 but had gone to the other extreme during 1944. Because of unexpected developments in the European war, not one division was sent to the Pacific after August 1944; and planned deployment totals for the Pacific for

THE 90-DIVISION DECISION

One of the most under-appreciated strategic risks that U.S. Army leaders, particularly Chief of Staff Marshall, accepted during World War II was the midwar decision to limit to ninety the number of U.S. Army combat divisions created. This decision, finally reached in May 1944 after more than two years of debate and analysis, above all reflected Marshall's astute judgment and ability to see the full spectrum of issues from broad national needs down to American combat capabilities. Crediting the fighting ability of U.S. soldiers and units, Marshall recognized that every additional division absorbed men required more elsewhere. With only a finite number of trained officers, and relying upon the steady flow of individual replacements to keep those ninety divisions up to strength, the United States was able to ensure that it provided steady, decisive combat power. Although tested by the emergency of the Battle of the Bulge in late 1944, Marshall's calculated risk proved correct.

1944 were never attained. European deployment, on the other hand, mounted steadily and substantially exceeded the planners' estimates. At the end of April 1945, when the Army reached its peak strength of 5.4 million overseas, over 3 million were in the European Theater and 1.2 million in the Pacific. Regardless of the type of war fought in World War II—concentration and invasion in Europe or blockade, bombardment, and island-hopping in the Pacific—each required a tremendous outlay of American military strength and resources.

Balancing Means and Ends

Throughout the conflict the matching of means with ends, of logistics with strategy, continued to be a complex process, for World War II was the greatest coalition effort and the first really global war in which the United States had participated. The wherewithal had to be produced and delivered to a multitude of allies and far-flung fronts over long sea lines of communications and all somehow harnessed to some kind of strategic design to defeat the enemies. As the war progressed, the Army strategic planners learned to appreciate more and more the limits of logistics in the multifront war. From the standpoint of the Americans, the basic strategic decisions they had supported from the beginning (the Germany-first decision and the primacy of the cross-channel attack) were in large measure justified by logistics. Each would capitalize on the advantages of concentrating forces and material resources on a single major line of communications and link the major arsenal represented by the United States with the strategically located logistical base offered by Great Britain. The realities of logistics had in part defeated their original BOLERO strategy, and forces and resources in being in other theaters had generated their own offensive strategy.

In the midwar era, while Allied plans remained unsettled, the competing claims of the Pacific and Mediterranean for a strategy of opportunism, the continuing needs of other far-flung fronts, added to the accumulated "fixed charges" (e.g., aid to China, Britain, and the Soviet Union and the rearming of the French) took a heavy toll on American resources. The full-blown war economy was matched by the full-blown war on the global scale. In and out of the international conferences of midwar in the era of relative plenty, the adjustment of means and ends went on and logistics remained a limiting, if not always the final determining, factor in the strategic debate. The scope, timing, landing places, and even the choice of specific operations were to a large extent influenced by the availability of the wherewithal, by the quantities that could be produced and delivered to the fighting fronts.

To logisticians in World War II, the balance among supplies and equipment, trained troops, and the shipping to transport them—the only means then feasible for mass movement overseas—was of continuing concern. In planning for that balance the factor of lead time was particularly important. For example, for the invasion of Normandy in June 1944 planning for the production of materiel had to start two years in advance, the buildup in England at least a year in advance, and the actual planning of detailed logistical support six months before the landings. Usually the shorter the lead time for logistical preparations, the narrower the range of strategic choices tended to be.

To the end the Army was of course one cog in the mighty American war machine, and it had to compete for resources with its sister services and with Allies. The home front also had to be supported. While the war cut deeply into the life of the American people, it was fought based on a "guns and butter" policy without any real sacrifice in the American standard of living. The Army was not anxious to cut into that standard of living. Nor did it have final say over the allocation and employment of key resources. To balance the allocation of forces, supplies, and shipping among the many fronts and nations, within the framework of the close partnership with the British, required a degree of central logistical control and direction at both combined and national levels unknown in earlier wars. A complex network of Anglo-American and national civilian and military agencies for logistical planning emerged. In the melding of resources and plans that continued in and out of the international conferences, planners took their cue from the basic decisions of the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS)—in this sense, the top logistical as well as strategic planning organization.

An imposing structure of federal agencies and committees grew up in Washington to control the nation's economic mobilization. Its keystone was the influential War Production Board (WPB) that controlled the allocation and use of raw materials, machine tools, and facilities with powers similar to those of the War Industries Board in World War I. In the military sphere the War Department, like the Navy Department, had a large degree of autonomy in controlling requirements planning, production, and distribution of materiel for its forces. The actual procurement (purchasing and contracting of munitions and other war materials) was carried out directly by the Army's technical services and the Navy's bureaus. Within the Joint Chiefs of Staff organization many logistical problems at issue between the services were settled by negotiation. The War Shipping Administration (WSA) operated and allocated the critical U.S. merchant shipping. Close cooperation between WSA and the British Ministry of War Transport resulted in the pooling of the two merchant fleets comprising the bulk of the world's mercantile tonnage. Other civilian agencies dealt with such critical commodities as food, petroleum products, and rubber. In the spring of 1943 most of the mobilization agencies were subordinated to a new coordinating unit, the Office of War Mobilization headed by former Justice James F. Byrnes.

Theoretically, U.S. munitions production along with that of the British Empire was placed in a common pool and distributed according to strategic need. Two Munitions Assignments Boards, each representing both countries and responsible to the CCS, made allocations. One board, sitting in Washington, allocated U.S. production, while a second in London allocated British production. Using the principles of Lend-Lease and reciprocal aid, these two boards made allocations to other Western Allied countries as well as to the United States and Britain. Supplies for the Soviet Union were governed by separate diplomatic protocols, and the boards seldom attempted to alter their provisions in making assignments. The common-pool theory, however, proved somewhat too idealistic for complete application. From the start it really applied almost entirely to American production, for the British had little surplus to distribute. Their contributions to the American effort,

though substantial, normally took the form of services and soft goods rather than military hardware. In these circumstances the Americans almost inevitably came to question the application of the common-pool theory and to make assignments on the premise that each partner had first call on its own resources. British participation in the allocation of American production became only nominal in the later war years.

However imperfect the application of the common-pool concept, Lend-Lease, with its counterpart, reciprocal aid, proved an admirable instrument in coalition warfare. Lend-Lease did what President Roosevelt had initially intended it should. It removed the dollar sign from Allied supply transactions and gave the Allies an unprecedented flexibility in distributing materiel without generating complicated financial transactions or postwar problems such as the war debts World War I had created. Under the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941, the War Department turned over to Allied countries approximately $25 billion worth of war materials. About 58 percent went to Britain, 23 percent to Russia, 8 percent to France, 7 percent to China, and the remainder to other countries. Included in these supplies were some 37,000 light and medium tanks, nearly 800,000 trucks, and 3,400 locomotives. The Army Service Forces was the Army's operating agency for administering this program; and from 1942 on, military Lend-Lease requirements were included with U.S. Army requirements in the Army supply program. This American largess was distributed almost exclusively to achieve complete military victory in the war, not to contribute to the postwar political purposes of any ally.

Even with American production in high gear during 1943–1945, critical shortages or bottlenecks developed to hamper operations at various stages. In early 1943, as in 1942, the most stringent limiting factor was the production of ships to transport troops and supplies. Indeed, in the spring of 1943, when President Roosevelt decided to divert scarce shipping to support the faltering British economy, he had to overrule the JCS, deeply concerned over American military requirements. After mid-1943, amid the changing requirements of the war in full bloom, the logistical bottlenecks tended to be specialized rather than general. From late 1943 until June 1944, the most serious critical shortage became the supply of assault shipping to land troops and supplies in amphibious operations. In the case of landing craft, the shortage was most severe in one specific category, the Landing Ship, Tank (LST). In April 1944 Winston Churchill became exasperated enough to wonder whether history would ever understand why "the plans of two great empires like Britain and the United States should be so much hamstrung and limited" by an "absurd shortage of the L.S.T.'s." In the last stage, after troops were ashore and fighting on the European continent, the principal bottleneck shifted to port and inland clearance capacity in that area and in the Pacific.

The basic problem of allocating resources between the war against Germany and the war against Japan remained almost to the end. Although the basic Germany-first decision held throughout the conflict, one of the most persistent questions concerned the proportion by which available resources should be divided between the two wars. This question reflected some divergence of political, military, geographical, and psychological factors in the Anglo-American strategy of the war. For

LST Discharging Cargo over a Pontoon Causeway

Britain, the war against Japan tended to be a sideshow; its leaders tended to emphasize the effort in Europe and the Mediterranean at the expense of the Pacific. The United States more than met its commitments in Europe but insisted from the beginning on a margin of safety in the war against Japan, for which it early had taken major responsibility. Furthermore, the pull to the Pacific in midwar that the U.S. Navy and General MacArthur, both now on the offensive, particularly welcomed became for the Washington high command a lever against overcommitment in the Mediterranean. At the midwar conferences the Anglo-American debate focused on the division of resources among the theaters where the two nations combined their efforts: the Mediterranean, northwest Europe, and Southeast Asia. For the Pacific, American military leaders simply presented their decisions, logistical as well as strategic, to the conferences for the stamp of approval. In effect, American military leaders in midwar went far toward asserting unilateral control over the division of American resources between the two wars.

In the final analysis, the multifront nature of the war developed as a product of changing circumstances rather than of a predetermined grand design. Coalition strategy evolved as a result of a complex, continuing process—a constant struggle to adjust ends and means, to reconcile diverse pressures, pulls, and shifting conditions in the global war, and to effect compromises among nations with diverse national interests. That strategy, frequently dictated by necessity, often emerged from events rather than having determined them.

The Washington high command was to end the war as it began it, without a fully developed theory on how to match strategic plans, manpower, and resources for a coalition, global war. But throughout its search for the formula for victory it had consistently pursued its goal of winning the war decisively, of complete military victory. This

was the overriding goal; all secondary issues, such as postwar political aims, while not ignored, were clearly of lesser importance. This does not mean that the joint chiefs were naïve to the dangers, especially after it was clear in 1944 that the war would be won, of postwar Soviet power and its domination of Eastern Europe. There were voices within the highest levels of government that clearly saw the dangers of any single power dominating Europe. There is evidence that the attitude of total cooperation with the Soviets began to break down in the middle of 1945, when it became clearer that U.S. national security interests might not be well served by blindness to the obvious dangers of a dominant or expansionist Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the focus of the military strategists remained on completing the military defeat of Germany and then turning all the power of the "United Nations" against Japan. For that, cooperation with the Soviet Union remained vital; no other agenda could upset that goal. Whatever general political objectives the President had—he was a supremely political animal—he was committed to the strategic doctrine of complete victory first. The military planners, while not ignoring the future any more than the President did, maintained a similar focus.

Institutionally, World War II became for American strategists and logisticians an organization war, a war of large planning staffs in the capitals and the theater headquarters. Strategy and logistics became big business, established industries in the huge American wartime military establishment. World War II contributed significantly to the education of American Army planners in these arts. General Marshall, for example, once succinctly observed that his military experience in World War I had been based on roads, rivers, and railroads; for World War II he had to learn all over again and to acquire "an education based on oceans."

Throughout, Americans evinced their national habit in war: a penchant for quick, direct, and total solutions. The strategic principles they stressed were entirely in harmony with their own traditions and capacities. They proved particularly adept in adapting their mass-production economy to war purposes and in applying power on a massive scale. How far they had come in the quarter-century since World War I was evidenced by a comparison of their strategic experience in the two coalition world wars of the twentieth century. In World War I the United States, a junior partner, conformed to the strategy set by the Allies; in World War II the United States came to hold its own in Allied war councils and played an influential role in molding Allied strategy, virtually dictating the strategy of the Pacific war. By the end of the war America was the senior partner in the coalition with Britain and potentially the only direct rival to the growth of Soviet power. In meeting the problems of global coalition warfare, in the greatest conflict in which the United States had been involved, American strategists and logisticians came of age.

The multifront war of mass, technology, and mobility that taxed the strategists and logisticians in Washington also challenged the overseas commands and the tacticians in the field. As the war had progressed, the role of the theater commands in strategy, logistics, and tactics had become increasingly significant. It is appropriate, therefore, at this point to turn from the Washington high command to the Army overseas and to trace the actual course of operations in the double war.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Americans invade North Africa? If you were planning the American strategy for 1942–1943, what would you do?

2. Discuss the comparative roles of Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States in the fight against Germany. To what degree was the invasion of North Africa and then Italy a second front against Germany? How would Marshall Stalin have viewed this issue?

3. To what degree was Churchill motivated by his view of what postwar Europe would look like? Roosevelt? Stalin?

4. Why did the proposal to invade southern France in 1944 cause such a major disagreement between the Americans and the British?

5. Why was it so important to obtain the Soviet Union's involvement in the war against Japan? What was the strategic situation in the war against Japan at the time of the Yalta Conference in February 1945? At Potsdam in July 1945?

6. Discuss the background of the Army's decision to activate only ninety divisions. What impact would more divisions have had?

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